7 Ways to Connect with Your Holiday-Only Church Goers

It’s wonderful to see our churches full and filled with joy and music during the holidays. And every year we miss the opportunity to keep those holiday-only church goers coming back. We may not be able to get them to come all the time, but we can certainly help them stay connected and let them know what they are missing out on.

Here are 7 ways to connect with your holiday-only church goers:

1) Ask every church member, especially the ones who come only during the holidays, as well as all new visitors to like your church’s Facebook page. Give them time and permission in the beginning and before the end of the service to take out their smart phones, go to the church’s Facebook page, and like/check in. Have signage throughout the church to like the church’s Facebook page and printed on any handouts. Consider having a contest that links Likes to the church’s Facebook page. For example, announce that Mr. & Mrs. Brown will contribute $100.00 to a specific church-related mission project if we reach 100 Likes by the end of the day.

2) When asking visitors to submit their contact information consider an incentive. For example, you could say that for each contact/connection card filled out, the church or specific church members will donate $5 or a bag of groceries to the local food pantry. Make sure visitors know that all information collected is held in strict confidence and is for sending church-related updates only.

3) Ask well connected people to invite others. Identify influencers (members who are well-respected and are personally connected to a lot of people in your church and/or the community, and/or belong to groups/organizations) in your church. Ask those influencers as well as members who are in informal/social groups (like book clubs, play groups, dads and moms groups) to invite their network of friends/family to holiday activities and church. Holiday season is the perfect time to ask people to church.

4) Ask your church Super Users to share holiday time/seasonal church posts on their own personal social media accounts to spread the message of hope and love from church.

5) Ask members to help reach out and personally invite those they know who have not been attending worship to come back.

6) Plan ahead. Make sure your church schedule and upcoming events/activities are posted at your holiday services to bring people back after the holidays. For these upcoming events/activities consider requesting RSVPs. This gives you an opportunity to connect, follow up for contact info and to ensure you have a way to send them reminders for the upcoming events/activities. Also set up a Facebook Event for each upcoming event/activity on your church’s Facebook page, and invite people to RSVP right from Facebook during the service. Then Facebook will also send reminders.

7) Consider posting more on your church Facebook page during the holidays as a way to connect with people more often. Offer online help, inspiration and professional advice every day through Facebook posts, and be sure your posts are mobile friendly. For example, is your child sick today and you had to call out of work? Here’s a prayer. Or, remember to insulate your outdoor faucets for the winter (picture of youth members wrapping up outdoor facets for senior members.) Provide a simple prayer/thought of the day/an image that reassures them about everyday concerns.

Here are more ideas about what to post:

* Highlight and thank individuals on your church’s Facebook page for their service and help. Make it inspirational and include photos so people will share it. For example, show a picture of a youth member bringing food to a homebound member along with a great big thank you for their help.
* Use social media to highlight what makes your church special with pictures and short videos. Does your church have a great music program? A quilters club, a book club, or Tai Chi club? Show it to the world and use it to get your holiday-only churchgoers to come to church more often.

Do your holiday-only church goers know all the things that happen at your church? Give them a reason to show up or at least keep them informed to help them feel connected to their church that misses them the rest of the year. Start with one idea from the list above and build from there.

Need help? Please reach out to me. I help many churches put in place strategies just like these to build attendance and welcome new visitors. Some of these can be set up in a few days, and then you’ll have these strategies in place before your holiday church goers arrive this year.

Reach me John Fong at:

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